



When it's sunny, we usually go to the beach. If it rains, we stay at home and read.



If it's sunny tomorrow, we'll go to the beach.

Presentation

If + present simple, present simple

You use *if* or *when* with the present simple followed by the present simple in the main clause to talk about facts and things which are generally true:

If it's sunny, we go to the beach.

When it's sunny, we go to the beach.

If it rains, we stay at home.

When it rains, we stay at home.

This is often called the zero conditional.

If + present simple, will

You can also use *if* with the present simple to talk about a possible future situation or action. You use *will* / *won't* in the main clause to talk about the result of that situation or action:

If it's sunny tomorrow, we'll go to the beach.

This is often called the first conditional.

Note that you use *if* with the present simple, not *will*, to talk about the future.

(don't say *If it will be sunny tomorrow, we'll go to the beach.*)

You can also use the present simple to talk about the future after time conjunctions. See Unit 54.

Position of if

You can use *if* in two possible positions.

- *if*-clause first: *If it rains, we'll stay at home.*
- main clause first: *We'll stay at home if it rains.*

When the *if*-clause is at the beginning of the sentence, you use a comma to separate it from the main clause.

If it's sunny, we'll go to the beach.

if or when?

When you talk about things that are generally true, you can use *if* or *when*. There's no difference.

If it's sunny / When it's sunny... If it rains / When it rains...

When you talk about situations in the future, there is a difference between *if* and *when*.

If I see Jim, I'll let him know. (You don't know if you're going to see Jim, but you know it's a possibility.)

When I see Jim, I'll let him know. (You know you are definitely going to see Jim.)

unless

unless = *if ... not*

We'll go to the beach tomorrow unless it rains. = *We'll go to the beach tomorrow if it doesn't rain.*

1 Match 1–6 to a–f.

1 I'll be really surprised
 2 I'll take a break
 3 If you talk to Ruth,
 4 It's really cold
 5 If the storm doesn't stop,
 6 The children always behave badly

a if he passes all his exams.
 b when the teacher isn't in the classroom.
 c they'll cancel the flight.
 d when I finish this exercise.
 e when the wind blows from the north.
 f will you tell her about the party?

2 ⓠ Complete the conversation with the present simple or will future form of the verbs in brackets. Then listen and check.**Conversation 1**

A: What do you usually do at the weekend?

B: If I¹ (not / have) any work to do, we² (often / go) away somewhere.

Conversation 2

C: What are you doing this weekend?

D: I'm not sure. If the weather³ (be) good, we⁴ (take) the kids to the zoo.

Conversation 3

E: Is Tim here today?

F: I don't know. I haven't seen him.

E: Well, if you⁵ (see) him,⁶ (you let) me know, please? I need to talk to him.

Conversation 4

G: The receptionist isn't here today. She's not well.

H: OK. I'll tell Laura. She⁷ (usually / cover) on reception if the receptionist⁸ (be) absent.

3 Complete the second sentence so that it has the same meaning as the first sentence.

1 You won't pass the exam if you don't study.
 You won't pass the exam unless

2 We're going camping this weekend if it doesn't rain.
 We're going camping this weekend unless

3 I'll drive you to the airport tomorrow if John doesn't want to.
 I'll drive you to the airport tomorrow unless

4 We don't go out in the evenings unless we can get a babysitter.
 We don't go out in the evenings if

5 That plant will die unless you water it.
 That plant will die if

4 Complete these sentences so that they are true for you.

1 I'll probably tomorrow, unless

2 If I have time this evening,

3 I don't usually unless I really have to.

4 If I have any free time during the week, I usually